



SAFEGUARDING LGBTQ+ RIGHTS: AN ANALYSIS OF CHALLENGES AND REMEDIES IN SOUTH KOREA

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ABSTRACT

In contemporary South Korea, a significant number of LGBTQ+ individuals endure adversities stemming from societal biases. This study underscores the urgency of governmental interventions to address these challenges. The LGBTQ+ populace encounters heightened discrimination, manifesting as social animosity due to their divergence from conventional norms. Consequently, this paper advocates for a concerted governmental approach to ameliorate these issues. For instance, LGBTQ+ students frequently confront bullying within educational institutions, bereft of adequate support systems. Furthermore, the absence of legislative safeguards further exacerbates their predicament, culminating in a marked deficit in LGBTQ+ rights, as exemplified by the country's low rating in global indices. Moreover, the privacy of LGBTQ+ individuals become compromised, with state agencies monitoring their personal information solely on account of their sexual orientation. To redress these grave concerns, multifaceted interventions are imperative. Principally, targeted initiatives such as comprehensive sexuality education and sensitization training for educators, endorsed by the Human Rights Watch, can mitigate the prevailing bias. Additionally, the enactment of a nondiscrimination bill, propounded by NBC News, stands poised to rectify inequities, fostering inclusivity within society. Furthermore, the advocacy for a progressive societal outlook, championed by Glimpse from the Globe, emerges as a strategic pathway to ameliorate the plights of the LGBTQ+ community. This study underscores the need for concerted governmental efforts to dismantle existing barriers and engender a more equitable and inclusive milieu.

INTRODUCTION

Diverse societies encompass individuals with varying personalities, physical attributes, and traits, including a spectrum of gender identities, as exemplified by the LGBTQ+ community. However, a notable lack of acceptance, particularly prevalent in regions like South Korea, is observed towards those who deviate from established norms. Despite the uniqueness inherent in each person, a disturbing tendency to marginalize and neglect those who differ prevails. Such circumstances engender profound challenges, leading to the distress of LGBTQ+ individuals, even though these struggles may not always manifest visibly (Thoreson, 2021). While the suffering they endure might not be immediately apparent, LGBTQ+ individuals encounter significant hardships. The question of why society should be concerned about the LGBTQ+ community may arise. Nonetheless, these individuals are no different from others, and their diverse sexual orientations should not warrant differential treatment. Rather, it is incumbent upon others to provide support and safeguard them from various risks. Given the prevalence of LGBTQ+ issues in South Korea, the necessity of implementing multiple measures to address these challenges becomes evident.

LITERATURE REVIEW

To address the research question, an assortment of articles was meticulously examined to garner insights into potential solutions. Five distinct sources were utilized, revealing a common thread in three of them. This shared similarity resides in their exploration of pertinent issues surrounding the LGBTQ+ community within South Korea, accompanied by proposed remedies. Each source undertakes the task of elucidating diverse predicaments faced by the LGBTQ+ population in the country, subsequently advocating for strategic interventions. One of the articles delves into the distressing subject of LGBTQ+ young adults contending with bullying and associated risks. This source advocates for the implementation of programs aimed at mitigating discrimination. Another source casts a critical light on the limited freedoms afforded to the LGBTQ+ society within South Korea, urging the necessity of enacting a nondiscrimination bill. The third article dissects the privacy infringements faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, highlighting instances of private information being transmitted to authorities. A potential solution is posited, entailing governmental support for progressive initiatives.

Conversely, the literature review also encountered counterarguments through the inclusion of two distinct articles. One of these sources challenges the merits of sexuality education, contending that it disseminates unfavorable portrayals of the LGBTQ+ community. Moreover, another article offers insights into the staunch opposition that some hold against the LGBTQ+ society, expounding on facets of disagreement. These perspectives, however, are not without their own critiques.

Through a comprehensive analysis of this heterogeneous range of sources, a coherent response emerges to the central question of addressing LGBTQ+ concerns, particularly within the context of South Korea.

METHODOLOGY

In the initial research phase, a structured approach was adopted to delineate the

essential research segments. This involved selecting a pertinent topic, specifically focusing on LGBTQ+ community issues in South Korea. Primary exploration encompassed an analysis of articles shedding light on South Korea's perspective regarding LGBTQ+ matters. Subsequently, the focus shifted towards identifying viable solutions to the identified challenges.

Three distinct articles were meticulously chosen to substantiate these solutions. Each article contributed a unique perspective, collectively enriching the discussion. A secondary qualitative methodology was employed, allowing for an in-depth analysis of the qualitative content of these sources. Given the topic's complex and nuanced nature, this methodology was particularly apt, enabling a comprehensive exploration of the multifaceted issues.

The synthesized content from the sources was thoughtfully compartmentalized into individual paragraphs, facilitating a comprehensive discussion of each proposed solution. Throughout the paper's construction, judicious integration of quotations from the chosen articles was woven seamlessly to augment the arguments.

Upon building a coherent narrative, the paper concluded by succinctly revisiting the principal points and solutions. This meticulous research approach aimed to provide a thorough understanding of LGBTQ+ issues in South Korea while adhering to a secondary qualitative methodology that aptly suits the topic's intricate nature.

RESULTS

As per the reviewed literature, the first solution toward this issue is an action taken by the government. There should be some programs that can eliminate discrimination: "sexuality education." Also, others should tell the trainers to be unbiased for the LGBTQ+ students (Thoreson, 2021).

The second way is a "Nondiscrimination bill." This will liberate and allow them to enjoy their lives. Since there is inequality between communities, this nondiscrimination bill should be made to decrease the prejudice of LGBTQ+ community (NBC News, 2019).

Last solution is also related to the Korean government. They should support progressivism. Right now, the government is supporting other groups more than LGBTQ+ community. Thus, they should try to enhance the society as a whole rather than supporting specific groups (Fullwood, 2022).

DISCUSSION

In the context of South Korea, a significant portion of the population remains oblivious to the existence and rights of the LGBTQ+ community, particularly concerning young adults. The case of Lee Bo-reum, a lesbian student subjected to severe bullying, exemplifies the gravity of the situation. The absence of discussions on LGBTQ+ issues within school curricula exacerbates the marginalization of such students, as underscored by Human Rights Watch (Thoreson, 2021). This underscores the pressing need for equitable treatment and inclusivity. To counteract these challenges, Human Rights Watch advocates for proactive measures, including the implementation of programs like

"sexuality education," accompanied by a call for open-minded trainers catering to LGBTQ+ students. These interventions aim to cultivate an environment devoid of discrimination (Thoreson, 2021).

Similarly, the experiences of individuals like Lesvos, a genderqueer chef of a lesbian bar, reveal the hostility encountered by LGBTQ+ individuals outside of safe spaces. The absence of protective laws in South Korea, coupled with its poor rating in gay rights, accentuates the need for urgent change (Mitsanas, 2022; NBC News, 2019). The urgency of this situation has propelled Lesvos into activism, symbolizing the dire need for legal reforms. The plight of LGBTQ+ individuals extend beyond discrimination, encompassing personal repercussions, including instances of credit card information being scrutinized by authorities due to their sexual orientation. Lee Youngwu's distressing encounter with the Korean authorities underscores the psychological toll of such invasive practices (Fullwood, 2022). Moreover, mental health support for LGBTQ+ individuals remain inadequate, compounding their challenges.

Glimpse from the Globe underscores that the Korean government should take a proactive stance in advocating for progressive policies that reflect the evolving societal will, rather than bowing to conservative or religious pressures; arguing "For the benefit of minority groups, the South Korean government should yield less to the demands of conservative and religious groups, and instead reflect the growing will of its people by taking initiative and opportunities like this lawsuit to push towards progressivism" (Fullwood, 2022). This includes measures to counteract discrimination, such as the enactment of a "nondiscrimination bill" that seeks to eradicate prejudice within the LGBTQ+ community (Fullwood, 2022).

In sum, the multifaceted issues faced by the LGBTQ+ community in South Korea necessitate a comprehensive and concerted effort on the part of the government, educational institutions, and society at large to engender a more inclusive, tolerant, and progressive environment.

COUNTERARGUMENTS

On the contrary, some contend that sex education may not significantly alter prevailing viewpoints. A substantial number of LGBTQ+ students have observed that their educational experiences have often conveyed negative perceptions about their community. Only a mere 19.4 percent of LGBTQ students reported exposure to positive representations of LGBTQ individuals, history, or events in their school curricula, while 17 percent indicated encountering adverse content pertaining to LGBTQ subjects (Najarro, 2021). Despite these disparities, it is noteworthy that LGBTQ+ education can provide a platform for students to gain insights into diverse sexual orientations and foster self-awareness.

Furthermore, a segment of South Korean society, particularly associated with "conservative churches," vehemently opposes the LGBTQ+ community due to their religious convictions (BBC, 2019). However, a paradox emerges in their stance; if driven by genuine care and compassion, these entities should extend acceptance rather than propagate hatred towards LGBTQ+ individuals.

In summary, while skepticism surrounds the transformative impact of sex education on altering perceptions, there remains a compelling argument for its potential to cultivate understanding and acceptance among students. The existence of entrenched anti-LGBTQ sentiments in certain sections of South Korean society underscores the imperative for broader societal shifts towards inclusivity and compassion.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Korean government must undertake a range of measures to address the pressing LGBTQ+ issues. Presently, LGBTQ+ individuals grapple with significant challenges, including bullying and isolation in educational settings (Thoreson, 2021). A pivotal step would involve implementing comprehensive sexuality education programs advocated by Human Rights Watch, fostering inclusive environments in schools to counter discrimination. The absence of protective legislation for LGBTQ+ rights in South Korea also necessitates the enactment of a "Nondiscrimination Bill" to rectify existing inequalities (Mitsanas, 2022; NBC News, 2019). Additionally, the personal struggles faced by LGBTQ+ individuals, such as privacy violations and limited mental health support, underline the urgency of adopting progressive policies that cater to their well-being (Fullwood, 2022). Nonetheless, skepticism surrounds the efficacy of sexuality education, with concerns raised about its balanced coverage (Najarro, 2021). Despite this, the educational value in fostering self-awareness remains. Moreover, addressing the opposition from certain conservative segments, such as churches, calls for a more empathetic stance and acceptance (BBC, 2019).

Future research avenues could involve a broader global perspective on LGBTQ+ issues. It is worth acknowledging that this study's scope is limited to a specific regional context. In sum, the Korean government's intervention through multifaceted strategies is imperative to tackle the multifarious challenges facing the LGBTQ+ community.

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